

EXHIBIT 11

Letter dated March 2, 1906 to Commissioner of Indian Affairs
from J.R. Meskimmons

20

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
UNITED STATES INDIAN SERVICE,

Carson City Nevada,
March, 2, 1908.

The Honorable,

The Commissioner Indian Affairs,
Washington D.C.

Sir: On page 3 of my letter of Jan. 23, 1908, I mentioned the fact that there was no reservoir site of much value below Mason Valley, and that I understood that the Reclamation Service had under consideration the location of a reservoir ~~site~~ in the Antelope Valley on the head waters of the Walker River, and that I was not prepared to say just what conclusions had been reached in regard to same. However I had heard from what appeared to be good authority that the reservoir had been reported as being entirely feasible and that the people of Mason and Smith's valleys would avail themselves of the irrigation law, organize themselves under its provisions and ask the Department to proceed with the construction of the reservoir in question.

I therefore dismissed for the time being the question of the Indian Department making use of that particular reservoir site and and tried to locate another but found none worth mentioning, and because of the conditions just mentioned suggested that it might be necessary to procure water by pumping either from the lake or from wells. I have followed up the idea of pumping and find that the more I look into it the less feasible it becomes, and am more than ever satisfied that pumping should be used only as a last resort.

WRID05

00074

0777

FL

NARA00007355-1
US0034254

(Hon. Com. #2)

21

I therefore continued the search for a reservoir site and in conversation with the farmers of Smith and Mason valleys learned that there are many large farmers in these two valleys who will not agree to the Irrigation act which limits the amount of land which can be irrigated to 160 acres per individual and the opinion is that there is no common ground acceptable to the Interior Department upon which the farmers are willing to stand, and that it is likely to take years to settle the water rights as among themselves.

Upon the receipt of the above information I determined to visit the before mentioned reservoir site and report to you upon the feasibility of its use for the Indians.

I find it to be an ideal site -large enough to hold from 50,000 to 60,000 acre feet which is about the minimum flow of the Walker river during the non-irrigating season. It is a natural basin almost surrounded by mountains, into which the waters of the Walker river can easily be led through a canal or canals from a point above and from which the same can be taken by means of a tunnel and returned to the river again. A levee can be thrown across the upper side of the reservoir which will increase the capacity of same very materially if needed. I do not know of a place where the same amount of water can be stored at the same cost.

The Indians will need a large proportion if not all the water that can be stored here, as during a dry season they are without water from the first of June on to the end of the season. Counting the loss of one half during transmission in seepage and evaporation which is very conservative as there probably sixty miles of river between the reservoir and the land to be irrigated, there would be approximately 25,000 acre feet available. This would be sufficient to irrigate

(Hon. Com. #3)

22

10,000 acres well, three times.

If this site is secured all of the level land on the reservation can be irrigated. This amounts to fully 10,000 acres. If it is not used I have yet to discover a satisfactory method of irrigating same.

Upon my arrival at the site I found the reservoir half full of water and upon inquiry gained the following information the truth of which I have no reason to doubt.

The Rickey Land and Cattle Co. is diverting the water of the river through a canal into the reservoir, and has been doing the same for some time. The reservoir has been filled to such an extent as to require the moving of the public road which they are now doing. This Corporation or Rickey which which is practically one and the same, has employed an engineer whose name is said to be Henderson for the purpose of building said road around the mountain also of constructing a tunnel and controlling works in order to use the water of the reservoir for the irrigation of the land of the Smith and Mason valleys in exchange for the natural flow of the river during the summer months, which he intends to apply to his or their own land above the reservoir. They have employed miners to sink test holes along the line of survey of the tunnel, all of which seems to show that this Corporation has taken possession of this reservoir site for the benefit of themselves in opposition to the rulings of the Commissioner of the General Land Office and later of the Secretary of the Interior.

The legal status of the case is set forth in a letter from the U.S. District Attorney which I herewith enclose.

(Hon.Com.#4)

23

In view of the above facts I have the honor to recommend that the Department take immediate steps to secure this reservoir site for the Indians of the Walker River reservation, that I be authorized and instructed to take such steps as the Department think best in the premises to prevent this valuable reservoir site from falling into the hands of private individuals or corporations, and that I be instructed to submit plans and estimates for the construction of tunnel, controlling works etc. necessary to the use of said reservoir for the Indians.

Very respectfully,

J.R. Meekins
Supt. Irrig. S.D.A.

WRID05

0776

FL

00077

NARA00007355-4
US0034257

JUL 19 1906

58712

AUTHORITY

100478	RECEIVED
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS	JUL 25 1906

MAR 17 1906

2955 OFFICE OF

21145

FIELD SERVICE

MAR 2 - 1906

J.R. Washburne

SUP'T. IRRIGATION AND SPEC. DISB.

Reports on Reservoir Site for the
River Indians

Enclosure

To Secy of Mar 22/06
84473

Hester

784

WRID05

77777

NARA00007355-5
US0034258